

December 4, 2000

FACT SHEET

FINAL AMENDMENT TO AIR TOXICS RULE FOR AEROSPACE MANUFACTURING AND REWORK FACILITIES

TODAY'S ACTION

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is amending its air toxics rule for aerospace manufacturing and rework facilities to include a separate emission standard for exterior primers used in manufacturing large commercial aircraft.

EPA decided to amend the rule after an aircraft manufacturer raised significant technical concerns about its ability to achieve requirements for commercial exterior primers. That information indicated that commercial exterior primers meeting the standards were not currently available.

Today's amendment changes the emission limits of air toxics and volatile organic compounds from 2.9 pounds per gallon of primer used to 5.4 pounds per gallon of primer used.

There are more than 2,800 aerospace facilities nationwide, emitting about 200,000 tons of air toxics per year. Air toxic emissions from primer application are a small portion of the toxics emitted each year. Toxics also are released from these facilities during topcoat application operations, cleaning operations, chemical milling maskant application operations, and the chemical depainting (stripping) of aerospace vehicles and components.

This amendment applies to primer operations that are, or are part of, facilities manufacturing large commercial aircraft and that are a major source of air toxic emissions. Major sources are those facilities that have the potential to emit 10 tons a year or more of a single pollutant, or 25 tons of a combination of pollutants.

Today's amendment is not expected to change the health or environmental benefits of the air toxics rule for aerospace manufacturing and rework facilities. The amendment also is not expected to change compliance costs.

BACKGROUND

Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, EPA is required to regulate sources of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. For listed categories of "major sources" the law requires EPA to develop regulations that require the application of stringent air pollution reduction measures, known as maximum achievable control technology.

On July 31 1995, EPA issued the final air toxics regulation to control emissions of toxic air pollutants emitted during the process of manufacturing or refurbishing aerospace vehicles, such as airplanes, helicopters and space vehicles.

In September 1999, EPA stayed the compliance date for the portion of the rule setting emissions standards for organic air toxics and volatile organic compound emissions from commercial exterior primers used in manufacturing aircraft.

EPA decided to issue the stay after an aircraft manufacturer raised significant technical concerns about its ability to achieve the current requirements for commercial exterior primers.

When fully implemented, EPA's aerospace regulation will reduce emissions of a number of air toxics including chromium (a pollutant strongly suspected of causing lung cancer) and volatile organic compounds by 123,000 tons per year. This represents a 60 percent reduction from 1995 levels.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To download the final rule from EPA's web site on the Internet, go to "Recent Actions" at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>.

The rule also is available from the Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center, by telephone (202)260-7548 or by electronic mail, a-and-r-docket@epamail.epa.gov. The docket number is A-92-20.

For more information on this rule, contact Mr. Jaime Pagán, Emission Standards Division (MD-13), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27711, telephone (919) 541-5340.

The EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's home page on the Internet contains a wide range of information on air pollution programs and issues. The Office of Air and Radiation's home page address is: <http://www.epa.gov/oar/>.